

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

March 15, 2005

President George W. Bush
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

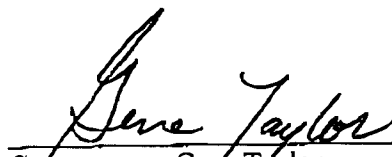
As members of the Congressional Shipbuilding Caucus, we have become aware that the Department of Defense is considering whether to significantly alter the construction strategy for the Navy's next generation destroyer, DD(X). The present strategy contemplated by your 2006 budget request is to build the vessels in two shipyards, Northrop Grumman Ingalls of Pascagoula, Mississippi, and General Dynamics Bath Iron Works of Bath, Maine. The revised strategy being explored by the Department of Defense is to conduct a winner-take-all competition in 2005 between the two shipyards.

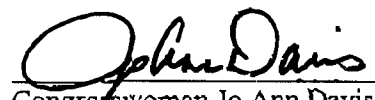
The practical effect of a winner-take-all competition is twofold. First, the program would likely be delayed to accomplish the competition, possibly resulting in the layoff of several thousand highly skilled employees and significantly increasing the cost of ongoing programs at both facilities. The U.S. shipbuilding industrial base has already endured a 75% reduction in employment during the past 15 years due to low rate production. Instability in the DD(X) program at this time could further exacerbate the permanent exodus of skilled men and women from the last remaining shipyards that produce our naval fleet.

Secondly, the losing offeror would likely exit the surface combatant market, forever limiting the ability of this Nation to construct destroyers and cruisers at any significant rate. With regard to Navy force structure, construction of surface combatants at single shipyard would impact the Navy's ability to maintain the quantity of warships stipulated by the fiscal year 2001 Quadrennial Defense Review. Further, it would also limit the number of warships that could be produced to support the force structure that will be defined by the ongoing Quadrennial Defense Review.

We believe that any decision to pursue a winner-take-all strategy for DD(X) is unwarranted, for there is no justification for this proposed action. Consequently, we ask that the DD(X) program be executed as contemplated by your 2006 budget request, with the current split of work planned for both shipyards in design and ship construction. With kind regards, we remain,

Sincerely yours,


Congressman Gene Taylor
Cochairman

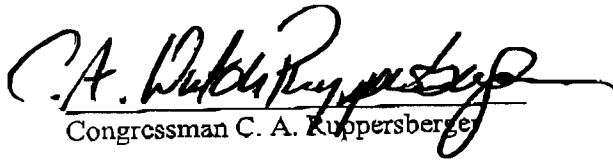

Congresswoman Jo Ann Davis
Cochairman



Congressman Christopher H. Smith



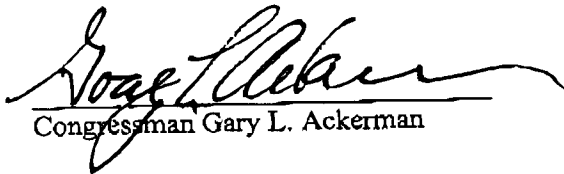
Congresswoman Thelma D. Drake



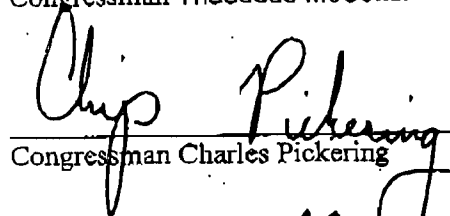
Congressman C. A. Ruppertsberger



Congressman Thaddeus McCotter



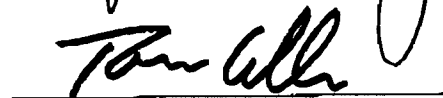
Congressman Gary L. Ackerman



Congressman Charles Pickering



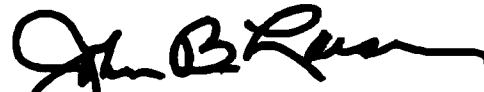
Congressman Randy Cunningham



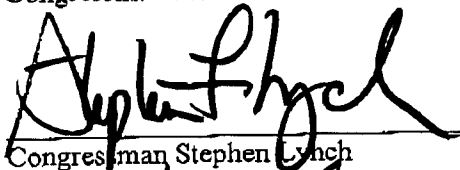
Congressman Thomas Allen



Congressman Michael H. Michaud



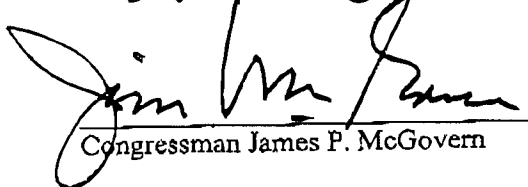
Congressman John B. Larson



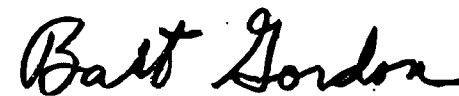
Congressman Stephen Lynch



Congressman Steve J. Israel



Congressman James P. McGovern



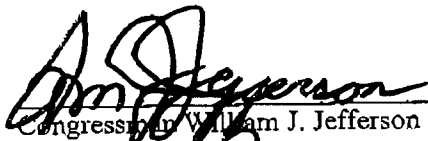
Congressman Bart Gordon




Congressman Mike McIntyre



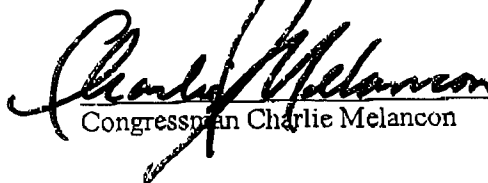
Congressman Dan Boren



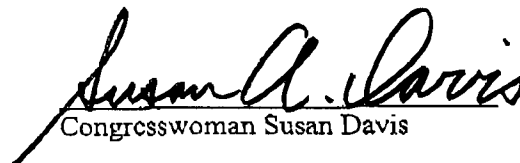
Congressman William J. Jefferson



Congressman Robert Brady



Congressman Charlie Melancon



Congresswoman Susan Davis

Jim Langevin
Congressman James K. Langevin

Roger F. Wicker
Congressman Roger Wicker

G. K. Butterfield
Congressman G. K. Butterfield

Robert Scott
Congressman Robert Scott

Sherrod Brown
Congressman Sherrod Brown

Rosa C. DeLauro
Congresswoman Rosa DeLauro

Stephanie Tubbs Jones
Congresswoman Stephanie Tubbs Jones

Juanita Millender McDonald
Congresswoman Juanita Millender McDonald

Jo Bonner
Congressman Jo Bonner

Rick Larsen
Congressman Rick Larsen

David Hobson
Congressman David Hobson

Frank A. LoBiondo
Congressman Frank A. LoBiondo

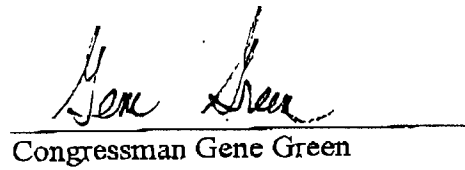
Maurice D. Hinchey
Congressman Maurice Hinchey

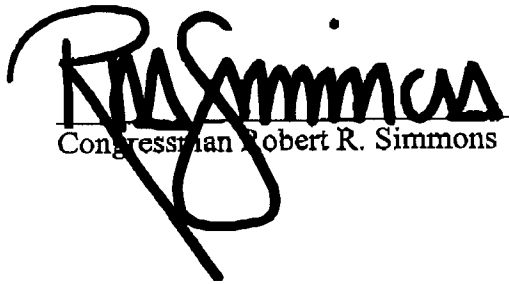
Tim Ryan
Congressman Tim Ryan

Mike Ross
Congressman Mike Ross

Patrick J. Kennedy
Congressman Patrick Kennedy


Congressman Bennie Thompson


Congressman Gene Green


Congressman Robert R. Simmons


Congressman Rodney Alexander


Congressman Bob Filner